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# NASA Procedural Requirements

**NPR 8020.12C**Effective Date: April 27, 2005  
Expiration Date: April 27, 2010**COMPLIANCE IS MANDATORY**[Printable Format \(PDF\)](#)

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## **Subject: Planetary Protection Provisions for Robotic Extraterrestrial Missions**

**Responsible Office: Science Mission Directorate**[| TOC](#) | [Preface](#) | [Chapter1](#) | [Chapter2](#) | [Chapter3](#) | [Chapter4](#) | [Chapter5](#) | [AppendixA](#) |  
[AppendixB](#) | [ALL](#) |

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## **CHAPTER 4. Management**

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### **4.1 Project Plan**

The management relationships established for the conduct of a specific planetary flight project shall be as described in the applicable Project Plan. Each planetary flight mission Project Plan will be reviewed by the PPO to ensure that management relationships permit the Associate Administrator for the Science Mission Directorate to fulfill his/her responsibilities, as identified in NPD 8020.7.

### **4.2 Delegated Responsibilities of the Planetary Protection Officer**

The responsibilities delegated by the Associate Administrator for the Science Mission Directorate to the PPO are identified in NPD 8020.7. In discharging those responsibilities, the PPO will:

- a. Represent the Associate Administrator for the Science Mission Directorate in external technical activities in the area of planetary protection. This includes consultation with other U.S. Government agencies, with representatives of other nations, and coordination with international bodies such as the Committee on Space Research of the International Council for Science.
- b. Maintain liaison with the secretariat and members of the Space Studies Board of the National Research Council to formally advise them of NASA planetary protection policy and major actions and to seek their advice and counsel.
- c. Establish planetary protection requirements applicable to each planetary flight program/project; coordinate and interpret these requirements with appropriate representatives of the planetary flight program and project offices; establish methods to verify that planetary protection requirements have been met.
- d. Provide support to planetary flight program/project offices in the following areas, as may be agreed to by the appropriate flight program and project managers and the PPO:
  1. Preparing guidelines, reviewing procedures, interpreting planetary protection documents when necessary, clarifying requirements, and other such information that may be useful to the flight program/project in meeting planetary protection requirements.
  2. Reviewing, concurring, or approving procedures, standards, specifications, and other documents used to control factors impacting planetary protection.
  3. Providing for the performance of biological assays to supplement those performed by a flight program/project, if applicable.
  4. Coordinating closely with flight program/project managers and providing recommendations and guidance as required.
- e. Providing oversight of flight program/project activities as required to ascertain the extent of flight program/project adherence to established planetary protection requirements. This may involve the following:

1. Performing verification assays of environments, facilities, and flight hardware independent of assays conducted by flight programs/projects.
2. Monitoring activities and reviewing records and data generated by a flight program/project which are used to verify compliance with planetary protection requirements.
3. Observing significant development and qualification tests and flight program/project operations to verify conformance with approved procedures and plans.
- f. Establishing and supporting research and technology development so that state-of-the-art methodologies are incorporated into the implementation of planetary protection policy.

| [TOC](#) | [Preface](#) | [Chapter1](#) | [Chapter2](#) | [Chapter3](#) | [Chapter4](#) | [Chapter5](#) | [AppendixA](#) |  
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